

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

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Why ignore our 200 km Canal?

It would appear that our contribution towards the Buckingham Canal has largely been to let it go to seed. We have also done the utmost damage that we could – by building the MRTS on the bed of the waterway, thereby rendering ineffective all efforts to revive it as a navigable canal. Now it appears that Andhra, our newly formed neighbour, has some really constructive plans as far as the Canal is concerned. And has in the process ensured that the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), which had its office in Chennai till recently, moved to Vijayawada.

Early in April this year, the Andhra Government inked a Rs 3,000 crore agreement with the IWAI by which the entire canal ecosystem that falls within the State will be redeveloped as National Waterway No 4. With around 888 km of the 1,095 km of the canal being within Andhra, the State views it as a crucial component of its infrastructure. A study has shown that it has the potential to transport around 11 million tonnes of cargo each year. Five districts, East and West Godavari, Krishna, Nellore and Prakasam – are expected to benefit immensely. Moreover, Andhra has other plans – it aims to link the Godavari and Krishna rivers and the Eluru Canal with the Buckingham Canal, thereby making for a comprehensive waterway network within the State. This is not a new idea, for the Buckingham Canal was declared a national waterway in 2008 when a Rs 1,500 crore scheme for its revival was announced. Since then nothing much has happened and the cost has doubled but it is felt that the Andhra Government is in right earnest this time around. It also has plans to develop tourism alongside the canal.

It is in the light of the above developments, and also the

heightened pace of activity connected with the new Andhra capital at Amaravati, that the IWAI has decided to shift its regional office from Chennai to Vijayawada. The office was set

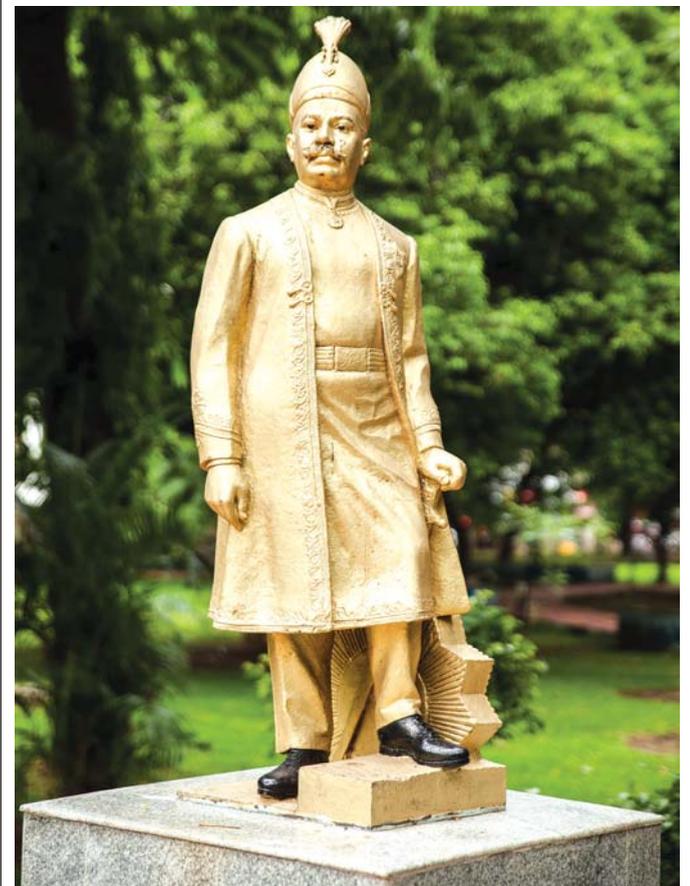
• by The Editor

up in Chennai in 2014, principally to oversee the development of the stretch of Buckingham Canal between Sholinganallur and Marakkanam. However the experience thus far has not been a happy one, what with the State Government being fairly non-responsive to the requirements of the IWAI and the latter also receiving considerable flak from the National Green Tribunal for

various aspects of its functioning. The IWAI has consistently been unsure of its mandate within Tamil Nadu. In the aftermath of the floods of November/December 2015, it was believed that there would be closer coordination between the State Government and the IWAI, especially as the Canal is considered to hold the key for any future deluges. But this has not happened and now the IWAI is itself moving.

While the shift will augur well for the Canal in Andhra, it can spell disaster for what is there of it in Tamil Nadu. Much of it within Chennai is already a lost cause. But the rest of it, which was clean and flowing till recently has become stagnant and polluted. This is chiefly because of the rapid developments

(Continued on page 2)



The repainted statue of the Rajah of Panagal in the Park named after him in T'Nagar. (See page 4)

High Court rescues heritage, AGAIN

The Law has spoken once again, and it is yet another judgement in favour of heritage conservation. The latest instance is the public interest litigation concerning the Royapuram railway station at present the oldest surviving station in the entire Indian subcontinent. Their Lordships not only refused to countenance its demolition to make way for development of a new station but also suggested that the railways take up modernisation keeping the heritage structure intact.

When this matter was referred to the High Court, we at *Madras Musings* had wondered if litigation was the only way to save heritage structures. We had stated that repeated recourse to the

• by The Editor

Law puts conservationists on a confrontation path with respect to those in administration. But we are happy to have been proven wrong. Clearly, if there is at all a saviour of heritage, it is the judicial process. Those who are in the executive, on the other hand, have largely wreaked havoc on our historic structures. And appealing to them does not result in any positive action.

Consider the facts. The *DGP Building* was saved by the Courts with express instructions given to restore the building and make use of it. True, the *Express Estates* case went against the conservationists, but even there the Judge observed that this was because there was no law that mandated the protection of built heritage not covered under the Ancient Monuments Act. When it came to the *Bharat Insurance Building* and the *Gokhale Hall*, the judgement was most emphatic. Not only did it forbid demolition but it also

recommended that the Government set up a Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) that would go into the merits of protecting 468 heritage buildings. It was thanks to that judgement that the Metro Rail had to give assurances that it would protect heritage structures affected by its drilling activities. It was also because of the same judgement that the Government had to take up the restoration of Chepauk Palace after parts of it were gutted. In the absence of such a verdict, the Government and organisations such as Chennai Metro Rail would have razed buildings with impunity – all in the name of development and progress, of course. Given such an impact of that single judgement it is rather ironic that the two parties against whom it was given – the LIC for Bharat Insurance and the Young Men's Indian Association for Gokhale Hall, have chosen to appeal against it.

In the Royapuram instance too, it is that judgement that has played an important role. The HCC, despite its somnambulant working style, has actually succeeded in evaluating the historic value of 66 buildings in the city. The Royapuram station happens to be one of them. This has come in handy for the High Court to prevent its demolition. The petitioner had argued that permitting the bringing down of the station would sound the death knell for all other heritage structures and this plea has had its effect.

In retrospect, the Railways' desire to demolish Royapuram is rather puzzling. This is an organisation that has preserved most of its station buildings, though purists would cavil at the manner in which this is being done. Still, its track record is far better than many other Government ministries, departments and under-

(Continued on page 2)

How old are the finds near Madurai?

(Excerpted by A Staff Reporter)

Keezhadi is a village 12 km from Madurai. The staff of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), scouting for information on potential 'dig' sites in the districts of Theni, Dindigul, Madurai, Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram and along the Vaigai river from 2013, heard of Keezhadi as a village where potsherds were regularly found while tilling the soil. Amarnath Ramakrishna, an ASI superintending archaeologist, followed this up, dug 53 trenches and has nearly 60 people digging carefully, collecting shards, antiquities and other clues to life from an ancient era.

The site promises to become one of South India's greatest archaeological discoveries, it is said. People are comparing it to Indus Valley sites. However, even if what is found is at least of the Sangam age, that dates the site to 500 BCE, a significant discovery even if it is a millennium after the last stage of the Indus Valley civilisation (2600-1600 BCE).

In the late 1970s, a school headmaster in Keezhadi had found terracotta artefacts in the village. A Madurai epigraphist visited the site after a tip-off from the teacher. When he revisited the site in 2014 along with the ASI team, they found an exposed brick structure.

With enough evidence pointing to a major discovery, the ASI team began the first round of digging in March 2015. Almost every one of the digs opened out large-sized bricks, including a wall, quartz beads with engravings, pearl micro-beads and terracotta figurines. The second round began early this year.

The finds included metal objects, spearheads, black-ware pottery, bangles, rings, an antimony rod, a dice, terracotta figurines that may have been chess pieces, nails, roof tiles and even a few gold beads, besides thousands of potsherds, including some with Tamil Brahmi inscriptions.

The most spectacular finds are the brick structures. Some appear to be canals, others part of a large habitation site and there is one that seems to be a furnace. Whatever found is being carbon-dated. It's too early to come to a conclusion, but the magnitude of the architecture suggests that this could have been a major settlement along the Vaigai river.

At the Pallichandai Tidal coconut grove, excavations are on at full steam and the villagers are becoming more involved. Most of the workers at the site are locals, who now have a steady source of income. Landowners, too, are readily leasing out plots for the excavations. Says Ramakrishna, "As great as Tamil civilisation is, there is a woeful lack of archaeological evidence of its past glory. I hope Keezhadi is the beginning of a magnificent discovery of the past."

A Canal ignored

(Continued from page 1)

along the Old Mahabalipuram Road. Many housing complexes and office blocks have been dumping garbage and debris indiscriminately into the Canal thereby ruining it. The administration has turned a blind eye during the construction stage of most of these projects and now, after their completion, there is

scant attention being paid to the havoc they are causing. If at all there was any hope, it was with the IWAI. Now even that is fast receding. Even at this stage, if the State Government chooses to intervene, it can get the Centre to retain an IWAI office in Chennai even while opening one in Andhra. But will it do the needful?

HIGH COURT RESCUES HERITAGE, AGAIN

(Continued from page 1)

takings. Moreover, in the case of Royapuram, the area owned by the Railways spans a whopping 72 acres of which the station occupies just a fraction. Why then does the Railways want to demolish the structure? The High Court has rightly suggested that any development in the place can happen with the station building remaining intact. Hopefully this should see better counsels prevailing at the Railways and better days for the Royapuram terminus.

Footwear in the House of God

The Man from Madras Musings is a regular at the temple dedicated to the God of Skulls, located in Peacock Land. You can see him there almost every Sunday. The place has been witnessing record crowds of late, but the administration ensures that everything is ship-shape and functioning at the height of efficiency. The temple, in short, has not had it so good in quite a while. But there is always the thorn among the roses and in this case it happens to be the place where you leave your footwear.

There was a time when a signboard would exhort everyone to leave his or her 'chapel' at the counter. This was pretty much superfluous and served the sole purpose of amusing MMM who could have written a whole tract on the philosophical underpinnings of such a Freudian slip. But the Chief always being against any writing that could start a riot, MMM desisted. Anyway, that placard has gone and the faithful, knowing what is expected of them, throng at the counter to leave their chapels, sorry, footwear behind.

This is where their travails begin. The counter is actually

forms several, until there are as many lines as there are people outside the windows. To anyone not familiar with what is happening it would appear that besiegers were trying to break in and one man was defending the room. Thus, with the division between in and out queues getting blurred, the man at the counter gets all confused. He never knows for certain as to whether he is collecting footwear or returning them. If that were not enough, the man perpetually runs out of numbered tokens. That means people who have come to give in their shoes have to wait till someone who is inside the shrine returns, hands over his/her token, collects his/her footwear and leaves. This only adds to the numbers at the window. It also means that the tokens become at times more valuable than coins minted by the Reserve Bank of India. Those at the counter decide on who is to get the token next and MMM will not be surprised if a black-market of sorts soon begins to operate outside the temple.

'Sole'ful matters

These are days when the average size of a family

the shoes are missing when they return. To this the inevitable response of the intruders is that in case the shoes are missing, they, the erstwhile owners of the shoes, would 'attend to' the man in charge on their return. More curses are then exchanged. In short, the atmosphere is charged and you could expect the God of Skulls to strike with thunderbolts at any time.

The process of collecting footwear is no joke either. Having navigated the crowds at the window and furnished your token, you shall have to catch the eye of the man who will dispense your footwear. The only signal that he recognises is the glitter of a coin. Not that MMM minds, but it is the lack of a system in an otherwise well-run shrine that is particularly galling. Those like MMM, who have long given up any hopes of their footwear being in safe custody while they go in to pray, make informal arrangements with shopkeepers nearby. There again, there is no guarantee for the safety of the footwear. MMM for one invariably ends up praying that he should find his shoes on return. The Gods have smiled

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

a boxed-in concrete structure with grilles all around. It would not be out of place in a zoo, for it has a marked resemblance to a lion's cage. You will always see an excited group of people peering into it and there will always emanate from within a series of bad-tempered growls, as emitted by the lion in the zoo if its daily rations are somewhat delayed. A closer look will reveal to you a leonine individual prowling hither and thither. He is the much-feared man in charge of the counter.

Now, this is a fairly simple operation. You turn up at the window with your footwear in your hand. The man gives you a numbered token, writes down the same number on the upturned soles of your footwear and then places them in a slot. When you return, you present your token, get your shoes or slippers or sandals or whatever, place a coin or two as a token of appreciation in a box and walk away. No rocket science here. But it all gets so complicated in reality that you would be better off leaving your footwear at home.

As always, there are faults on both sides. The throng being what it is, you need four times the number of people who are usually there to man the counter and that number is inevitably One. There are no separate in and out queues and even if there were, our populace, which believes firmly in lateral thinking,

is four and when all of them call on the God of the Skulls, it is not one member who collects the footwear of all others and delivers them at the window. Each individual holds out his/her slippers and this includes grandmother who has osteoarthritis, father who has a paunch that could crush six, and the young stripling whose weight already needs measurement in tonnes. All of them crowd the window holding out their footwear. In the process, grandmother of Family 1 has her toes trod upon by child of Family 2 who in turn has elbowed mother of Family 3 in the process of making it to the window. This means *pater familias* of Family 1, whose honour has been besmirched, has to challenge his counterpart in Family 2 to a duel even as the head of Family 3 generally vents his ire at the man inside the counter. That functionary, who is forever on the boil, rarely suffers from a shortage of insults and soon there is a free for all.

In the meanwhile, as is usually the practice in our nation, some enterprising individuals have found a short cut to the system. They, having discovered the door through which those at the counter enter and exit, simply walk in and leave their footwear on the floor and walk out. The counter manager shouts out that he is not responsible for what is left that way and the people should not hold him responsible in case

on his entreaties till now. It is no wonder that the area near the entrance of the temple is a sea of footwear. There is also no space where people can sit and put on their shoes. Not everyone is agile enough to manage this standing and some of the poses struck in the process could teach The Lord of Dance a thing or two.

God is in the detail

And yet the solution is quite simple too, as has been demonstrated in places such as Madurai and Thanjavur. We need more people manning the counter and a woman or two will only help, for they bring in certain patience to the task they handle. The pilgrims will also behave better, and will be less prone to some of their cheap behaviour. The entire practice of handing over footwear, often soiled as well, can be avoided if there is a system of people being asked to place them in cartons or plastic bags, to be made available at the counter. There could even be gunny bags for large groups of ten and more people. That way, only one member out of the group needs to stand in the queue to hand over and collect the footwear. And of course, we need more tokens to be produced and made available. Let us not make a virtue out of an artificially created shortage.

— MMM

OUR READERS WRITE



Heeded the districts too

I knew S. Sriraman (MM, July 1st) ever since 1963. I, as the convener of the North Arcot District Cricket Association (now the Vellore District Cricket Association) requested him to guide us in the formation of the Association and also to participate in the inaugural meeting. He came to Vellore along with Ramana- nujam of Nethaji Cricket Club, Chennai on July 2, 1964 and spoke on the ways to improve the standard of the game in the district. Later, as the founder Honorary Secretary of the Association from 1964 to 1971 and 1986, I attended the Annual General Body meetings of the TNCA and met him.

As pointed out in the article, Sriraman was shrewd without being manipulative and permitted the members, whether from the city or the districts to express their views and listened carefully even criticisms and always tried to solve them with the follow up action after the conclusion of the meetings. He did not distinguish action to be taken on the activities of the game between Madras city and all districts.

During his tenure good coaches were also sent to the districts to train the schoolboys and seniors.

P.S. Subrahmanian
subrah.vellore@gmail.com

Long live ISO 9002 !!

The travails of MMM at the Madras domestic airport prompted me to write this.

Rain inside the airport is common for both domestic and international passengers.

While MMM experienced a long queue for check-in at the domestic, similar is the story for international travellers - but with a difference!

International travellers after flying 15/20 hours land at MAA airport. All they would like is to reach their places as early as possible. But alas! They have to wait for 30/45 minutes for clearance at the immigration counters. It is a pitiable sight to see travellers standing with young restless kids. While passengers with children get priority in boarding, the same courtesy is not extended at the immigration counters.

For departing passengers, the immigration wait is 30 minutes!

On top of it all, we (shamelessly?) exhibit a huge board at MAA airport proudly displaying ISO approval!! (Wonder whether the ISO approval still holds good?)

N P Andavan
audcomp@yahoo.co.uk

It's Purasu

The quiz item no.19 (MM, July 1) states that *Butea monosperma* is known as *Purasai*. Actually it is *Purasu*. The first Tamil-English Lexicon (1779 and subsequently revised in 1809) published by early Lutheran missionaries identifies *Purasu* correctly with *Palasu*.

Purasai, as usually used, means a cord round the neck of the elephant and has nothing to do with the Flame of the Forest tree. In Sanskrit it is simply *Agnishika*, denoting the colour of the flowers of the tree. In Kannada, it is *Muttaga*. The doyen of Kannada linguistics, Rev.Kittel (1894) brilliantly derives it to mean "an enviroing tree".

The linguistic experts should try and find out whether there is anything common between the cognates *Purasu* and *Palasu*.

Rev.Philip K.Mulley
Anaihatti Road
Kotagiri 643217

Boys still later

In the item on Old Rosarians (MM, July 1st) issue, it was stated that 1955-56 was the year which had the last batch of boys in Rosary Matriculation School. This is wrong. I studied

Reuben David and his friends



Shobha Menon, while writing about the Vandalur Zoo referred to Reuben (Ruben) David Committee which chose the Vandalur site. Reuben David was a legendary zoo-keeper in Ahmedabad and a self-taught veterinarian. He was born in a Bene Israel Jewish family in Ahmedabad.

He created a zoo and Balavatika on the banks of the Kankaria lake in Ahmedabad, which was a great attraction. We were taken there as a part of our IAS training in 1963. Reuben took us and showed the animals, birds and reptiles with which he was very friendly. He could even pat the tigers! He was conducting many experiments in co-existence of animals and humans, birds and animals, a dog with a lion, etc. One of them was a chimp which was sharing its room with a broom, smoked a cigarette, and shook hands with us.

Reuben also suggested that he could sit on us like a child. My batchmates were

apprehensive but I told the chimp to jump on me which it did with great relish (pictured). He was awarded Padmashri by the Government of India. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, which he had served as the Superintendent of the Zoological Garden, had created a bronze bust there so that the animals and birds did not miss him.

Dr. C. Sundaram, IAS (RTD.)
A 601, Dugar Apartments
Keshav Perumal Puram,
Greenways Road
Chennai 600 028.

in the school up to Class V from 1963-64 to 1967-68. I also remember that it took a couple of more years before the school

ceased to be a co-ed institution. The Principal in my time was the tall Irish nun, Mother Teresa Xavier and though she looked imposing she was very kind to all of us. I am not aware of the reason for the school asking boys to leave in the middle of the academic year in 1955-56.

Incidentally, when my mother sought my admission in Vidya Mandir in Class VI, the then Principal of the school who was her schoolmate in R.K.M. Sarada Vidyalaya, T'Nagar, told her that as a school-mate she could offer her a glass of lemon juice, but was unable to admit me. This was in spite of my excellent academic record at Rosary Matric. Obviously, the sending-off in 1955-56, still rankled!

G. Srinivasan
LHS 14-B, Spring Haven
Chennai Port Trust
Chennai 600 001

It was Mu.Ka.

In Zoo Story Part III (MM July 1st, it is stated MGR inaugurated the Zoo in 1989. But he had died on December 24, 1987.

Shobha Menon replies: Sorry. My source had said "then Chief Minister" and I had not looked further. The "then Chief Minister" (in 1989) was Mu. Karunanidhi.

T. Viswanath
viswaexnora60@gmail.com

The problems with the Dadaps

The Flame of the Forest, *Butia monosperma* as it is known to botanists (MM, June 16th). It is popularly known in South India by its synonymous name, *Erythrina* species. There are over 130 species, in the tropics and sub-tropics, worldwide. Its flowers range from red to even yellow in some of the species.

In South India, there are two species which are economically used. One is the thorny Dadap, as it is called. It is known as *Mullumurenga* in Tamil and Malayalam. These are used as live standards for growing pepper vines on them. Within a few years of planting, both of them would have got fully established till they grow to 15 to 20 feet, trained as a single strait tree. These Dadaps are annually lopped before the S W Monsoon, so no flowering of these Dadaps take place. These standards live for more than 20 to 30 years. In the last 10 to 15 years, wasps have invaded the plantations and they damaged their livelihood. New cuttings of Dadaps fail and older ones do not thrive as before. India produces 55-60,000 tons of Pepper, each kilo selling at Rs 600 to 700. The Indian Spice Research Station, Kozhikode, has found an alternate variety known as *Erythrina sumbrans* as a standard for Pepper and is distributing it to the farmers. There is, however, no guarantee that a new breed of wasps may not invade them too.

In tea plantations, thornless varieties of Dadaps were used as low shade for the tea. It is convenient to regulate them by lopping the trees, just as monsoon sets in. However, since the 1960s, they have been totally eradicated as they depressed tea production. Most of the roots of Dadaps are on the surface up to 6 to 12 inches, competing with tea.

Unusually, these trees grow very rapidly in the cardamom growing tracts, due to higher level of moisture in the soil. If these trees are not removed, when overgrown, no cardamom bushes will grow near them as they are gross feeders on nutrients and moisture.

There was one of these trees at the gate of my apartment in T'Nagar. About the time I moved into the flat, old cherry trees

were removed, as they were attracting mosquitoes, and other species of well grown nursery trees were planted in the 1990s. An *Erythrina* was planted near the gate, very close to the well of the apartment block and a little beyond was the drinking water sump. In about seven years, this *Erythrina* has grown to 4 feet girth and started flowering quite profusely. When the drinking water was getting choked and water from the Corporation was blocked, the Secretary of the Association opened the tank to clean it and saw that a lot of roots of this *Erythrina* tree had invaded the tank by lifting the concrete cover. The concrete cover was - replaced. However, after another 4 or 5 years, the girth of the tree was more than 8 feet and its roots had again invaded the drinking water tank. When the new concrete slab too was totally damaged with some 100kg of roots in the concrete tank, the entire tree was uprooted. *Erythrina* roots can also damage sewage pipe lines and water pipe lines as they are greedy for water, unlike most other garden trees.

One reason I have given these particulars in depth is that these trees could be established by lake and pond sides in Chennai as they can quench their thirst, grow very well and give excellent flowers. However, the trees are very slow in growing in nature. Seeds need to be avoided and 6 to 7 feet long poles need to be secured for them to flourish.

As mentioned earlier, there are some 130 species of Flame of the Forest. Seeds of a third of them are potent *Erythrina* alkaloids and some are poisonous. For example *E.lysistemon* of South Africa has a toxic alkaloid, but it also has an anti-blood clotting substance which may be of value for treatment of thrombosis. All seeds are non-edible, they contain toxins for squirrels, rats, mammals, birds etc. The flowers alone are edible and used for dyes during festivals like Holi.

K V S Krishna
kvskrishna@gmail.com

Remembering a Raja

Panagal Park is perhaps one of the best-known landmarks of our city, one that even newcomers are familiar with. Though it is a vital lung for the TNagar area, it makes it to the news chiefly for the wrong reasons – the traffic congestion around it, the buildings that have come up on its periphery in flagrant violation of rules, and the multi-tiered parking complex that is forever on the verge of being built. The man who gave the park its name is commemorated with a statue that gazes serenely at the chaos and cacophony that surrounds it. Certainly, T Nagar has not developed the way the Raja of Panagal would have wanted it to. But its commercial importance cannot be denied. In a way, it is a mixed legacy, as many other contributions of Panagal have been, though all of them were brought forward by him with the best of intentions and the highest of ideals. July 9th this year marked the 150th anniversary of his birth.

Though he is always referred to as the Raja of Panagal (Paanagal would be its correct pronunciation), that was an honorific that the British bestowed on him. Born Panaganti Ramarayananar, he was of aristocratic stock, his family being landowners at Kalahasti. In keeping with the practice among upper-class families of the time, he was privately educated at first. He soon became proficient in Telugu and Sanskrit and then, on discovering that several of his playmates, also from titled gentry, were learning English, he acquired mastery over that language as well. In 1882, at the age of 16, he enrolled at the Triplicane Anglo-Vernacular High (now the Hindu Higher Secondary) School. Having completed his schooling there, he joined Presidency College, Madras, and graduated in 1893 with a BA degree in Telugu. He acquired his MA in Chemistry from the University of Madras in 1899. In the interim he obtained a BL degree at Law College. His achievements in scholastics surprised many and it led to the then Governor of Madras according to him a special honour – that of meeting him without prior appointment.

His scholarship in languages received encomiums from some other quarters as well. In 1910, Madras was rocked by the Radhika Santwanamu case, the first instance of a book being proscribed in India on grounds of obscenity. It was felt by many that the British had relied on biased counsel and that an objec-

tion expert ought to go through the book and decide the case on merits. V. Krishnaswamy Aiyer, then Member of the Governor's Executive Council, was of the view that Ramarayananar was best suited for this task. But the former's death in 1911 put paid to that idea. Another person who swore by Ramarayananar's linguistic ability was Pammal Sambanda Mudaliar. The two

● by
Sriram V

had studied together in college. In 1891, Mudaliar and his friends set up the Suguna Vilasa Sabha and were hardpressed for a script that they could act for their debut. They had watched *Chirakari*, a Telugu play staged by the Bellary Sarasa Vinodini Sabha, but lacked the proficiency to translate it into Tamil. Ramarayananar obliged them by translating the play into English. This in turn was translated into Tamil by Sambanda Mudaliar.

His family background, his proficiency in languages and his oratorical skills made Ramarayananar select public service as his chosen vocation. By way of a beginning, he successfully contested the elections for the North Arcot District Board. Within a short while he decided that this was too small a canvas for his



Raja of Panagal.

vision and in 1912 stood for election to the Imperial Legislative Council, Delhi, as the representative of the Madras Landowners' Association. He served for three years as a member of the Imperial Legislature where his debating style came in for great appreciation from the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge of Penshurst. In 1918, the Government conferred the title of Dewan Bahadur on him.

Ramarayananar did not neglect matters at the provincial level either. In 1915 he was elected President of the third Andhra conference. It was also at this time that he began involving himself in the emancipation of non-Brahmins in Madras Presidency. The Justice Party had then been formed in Madras by such leading lights as Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar, Sir Pitty

Theagaroya Chetty and Dr. T.M. Nair for this purpose and he too gravitated to this party. Thanks to his presence, the Justice Party began attracting a number of zamindars and landowners from Andhra, a membership that in the initial days was beneficial but would eventually prove to be its undoing. The party represented to the Government on the necessity for non-Brahmins to be given admission in colleges and also have assured Government jobs. In 1918, Ramarayananar was sent to England as a representative of the Madras Landowners to depose before a parliamentary committee on the condition of non-Brahmins in South India.

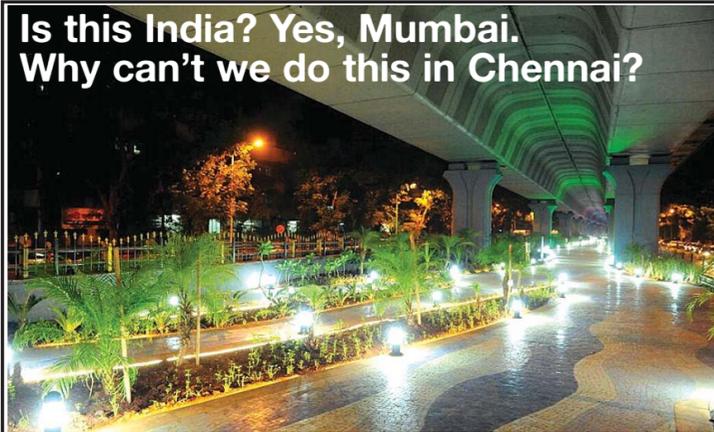
The Morley-Minto reforms had resulted in the Indian Councils Act of 1909. Under it, the provinces of British India were to see an increase in the number of

seats for Indians in the Provincial Legislative Councils, these being contested for the first time on the basis of a limited franchise. In Madras, the Justice Party won most of the seats in the Legislative Council when the elections were held in 1920, the Congress having decided to abstain. In accordance with the Morley-Minto reforms, the majority party in the legislature was invited to form the Government, this being a sum of three ministers who held some key but non-critical portfolios. It was a beginning, nevertheless, for Indians to have some say in governance. The leader of the Justice Party was Sir Pitty Theagaroya Chetty but he opted to continue playing a key role in the Corporation of Madras and the invitation to become First Minister for Madras went to A. Subbarayulu Reddiar. He was given the portfolios of Education, Excise and Public Works. Ramarayananar became Minister in charge of Local Self Government and Kurma Venkata Reddy Rao Naidu was given the portfolio of Development. The newly elected council was declared in session by the Duke of Connaught on January 13, 1921. However, the First Minister resigned within six months, on grounds of ill-health. He passed away in November.

Meanwhile, the post of First Minister, or Premier, of Madras, was offered to Ramarayananar and he accepted. His portfolios now included Health, Sanitation and Hindu Religious Establishments. He was to leave his impress on all these departments.

(To be continued)

Is this India? Yes, Mumbai. Why can't we do this in Chennai?



The flyover that became a garden

Steven A Pinto writes: Mumbai's first garden-under-flyover was recently inaugurated and named the Nanalal D. Mehta Garden. It is located under the Tulpule Flyover on Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Road.

The garden is the initiative of the 'One Matunga' group, which consists of residents in the area. They came together to protect this stretch from encroachment and misuse.

Soon after the flyover opened to the public about four years ago, it started turning into a hangout zone for hawkers, gamblers, drug addicts, etc. It was then that the residents of Matunga took over the responsibility of preventing this from happening.

"A few residents informed me about the encroachers and we took it up with the F/North

ward (Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai), requesting them to barricade the entire stretch," Nikhil Desai, recalls a Matunga-based activist.

Once the area was barricaded, about 40 people crowd-sourced funds and hired 24x7 private security to look after it for two years. They also get 10-12 BMC sweepers to clean the stretch and ensure that it does not become a dumping ground.

In 2011, they started approaching various government authorities with the idea of developing a small garden in the



space and got approval in 2014. After successful petitioning, the BMC began to redevelop the area in June 2015. Today,

this is the only encroachment-free flyover in Mumbai.

The garden has been designed to look like the Narmada

River. Engineers and architects studied the flow of the river and tried to replicate it on the garden pathway. The 600-metre pathway is blue in colour with a replication of rock formations as found on the banks of River Narmada. A granite block in the garden carries information about the landmarks on the way to the river, such as temples, and the region halfway through the stretch has been designed to look like the Narmada ghat. The garden has 300 lights and 11 rotatable CCTV cameras to ensure safety.

"To get space in such a crowded area is a boon. It's also fun as I meet my building friends here and we finish our walk together," Kritida Patel, a resident of the role says. The garden is open from 8 am to 1 pm and 4 pm to 9.30 pm.

•The Zoo Story... Part IV

Visitor friendly facilities

Come summer, popular attraction is the Elephant Shower Bank. By 3 pm every evening, crowds gather to enjoy the frolicking of the elephants – Giri, Oriyan and Ashok under the artificially created shower amidst the trees in their area! Or to watch the gentle giants being fed with sugarcane, banana and ragi balls.

Rahman and Aysha, the giraffes who came from the Calcutta Zoo, peer benevolently into the neighbouring enclosure with a pair of zebras from the Alipore Zoo. Soundarya, a 16-year-old hippopotamus, nuzzles her little one gently. The Wild

Ass arrived three years ago from Junagadh, and a herd of swamp deer from Lucknow! And from Mysore Zoo, the wallaby and the black swan last year. From Lucknow Zoo came the Golden Pheasant and Yellow and Blue Macaw who are also well settled and breeding comfortably. This year, the Underwater Weaving Gharial has been a popular attraction! Except in the case of the herds, all other animals are given special names by their keepers and the Chief Minister!

At the Open Bird Park over 1 hectare, 29 species are welcomed in by providing natural enrichment factors like nest boxes,

dung heaps, ponds, termite mounds, ash pits and palm trees. A biologist confirms, "The idea is to attract birds from all around through enriching nest boxes, feed and fruiting trees. There can be as many as 200 barbets on the ficus tree inside!"

A venerable old adjutant stork spreads out his broad wings, as excited schoolkids squeal, "veyil kayudhu paar"! At the heronries, replicas of Vedanthangal and Kodikarai, daily nesting material is supplied during the season October to March. Colourful groundnuts, sunflower seeds, small millets, fruits vegetables are laid out by staff Manivannan and



Elephant Shower Bank.

Pushpa for the 140 noisily chirping inmates of the Walkthrough Aviary. The AAZP boasts of the only naturally breeding ostrich (*theekayil*) population in Indian zoos.

Inside the King Cobra House, its two 13-ft long inmates are in an almost evergreen forest setting – riverine environment with

a water canal, a resting pot, leaf litter (being the only snake species that builds a nest!), temperature regulatory system, dripping water, tree perch, bushes all around and crevices for moulting. Menaka, their caretaker, remembers her earlier snake wards Diana, Charles and Elizabeth wistfully, they "actually seemed

to respond to my calls. These are still getting used to me!" At the non-venomous snake enclosure with termite mounds amidst natural vegetation and canals, there's a sign that reads: 'Do not get disappointed. Snakes generally take feed in night.'

Over a 1000 sambar and spotted deer roam in the Deer Safari. 'Beware of free ranging Deer and Snakes', cautions a sign. All the 2000 kg fodder requirements for herbivores is raised on campus and is wholly organic.

In 2014, the Butterfly Park was created over 2.5 hectare, with the help of experts from the Peechi-based Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI). Surrounded by host plants and nectar gardens and interconnected by streams, fascinating butterfly behaviour like 'gully bottoming' can be observed at close quarters. Says Dr. Kamraj, wildlife biologist, "There are many brilliant exotic species along with our own native species!"

It is interesting to note that the earliest animal enclosures were arranged according to geographical distribution of the spe-

cies. Then came the concept of Prey-Predator to simulate natural environment and ecological niches. The newest is the concept of Immersion Enclosures.

The only zoo in country to have entirely stainless steel barricades to help prevent rusting injury to animals, AAZP is also the one with the largest number of vehicles for visitors, 30 in all! Battery-operated cars at Rs 330 an hour, ferry visitors that seat upto five persons. Also available is a 15 seater at Rs 30 for each

seat, Rs 10 for children. Cycles are provided for Rs 15 an hour.

At the exit end is the Forest Wildlife Museum with a herbarium, zoo rocks and forest seeds exhibits. The Zoo Interpretation Centre's self-explanatory panels are strategically placed. The museum 'with dismantled material from the old Corporation zoo' that was established in 1990 is not open now.

(To be concluded)



The Open Bird Park.

CHENNAI HERITAGE

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(Current Affairs questions are from the period June 16 to 30. Questions 11 to 20 pertain to Chennai and Tamil Nadu.)

1. Which team avenged its last year finals loss to win the 2016 NBA Championship recently?
2. What major decision impacted Europe on June 23-24?
3. India, in a boost to its non-proliferation credentials, formally joined the MTCR on June 27th. Expand MTCR.
4. In a major game-changing breakthrough, scientists have discovered at least 54 billion cubic foot of which gas that is used in MRI scanners, spacecraft, telescopes etc in the Tanzanian East African Rift Valley?
5. The Union HRD Ministry's new initiative to cultivate reading habits among children and create a reading culture at school and community level is called?
6. Which 400 sq km island in the Brahmaputra River has become India's first island district?
7. The CSIR recently launched 'BGR-34', an ayurvedic drug designed to combat which ailment that is globally prevalent and rampant in India?
8. What first did Bhawana Kanth, Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh achieve in the Indian Air Force recently?
9. Which eminent businessman from the Bharti group has been elected the Chairman of the International Chambers of Commerce, the largest, most representative business organisation in the world?
10. 'A New World' is the slogan/motto for which global event starting in Brazil in early August?

- * * *
11. Panaganti Ramarayanan, whose birth sesquicentennial was observed on July 9th, is better known as...?
 12. What is the name of Shiva at Tiruvaiyaru?
 13. Of which iconic institution in the metropolis was Jawaharlal Nehru talking when he said "...always reminds me of an old maiden lady, very prim and proper, who is shocked if a naughty word is used in her presence...?"
 14. In the 'Black Town' of Madras, if Mint Street was Washers' Street, then which bustling thoroughfare was called 'Weavers' Street'?
 15. Who was the son-in-law of Lord Dalhousie who is remembered in Madras where two famous edifices bear his name?
 16. Which celebrated author reviewed art programmes for *Ananda Vikatan* under the pen name 'Karnatakam'?
 17. Kathirikkam and Manikkam were the assistants of which popular Tamil literary detective?
 18. In what is probably the first 'coup' in Madras in 1865, which governor was deposed by Edward Winter?
 19. The 1935 film *Menaka* was the first to feature the songs of which celebrated poet?
 20. *Madhorubhagan*, the controversial book by Perumal Murugan, is titled after a form of Shiva joined in temple where?

(Answers on page 7)

'Banding' for Carnatic Music

Reading *The Madras Corporation band: a story of social change and indigenisation* (Asian Music 1996-1997, 28: 61-86) by Gregory Booth (University of Auckland, New Zealand) brought back pleasant memories of my childhood in Madras. With Gregory's permission, I provide some details from his article from a Madras-history perspective.

P.R. Nathamuni (1900-1960) and his brother Lakshmi-pathi (1902-1990) established the Nathamuni Band (NB) in Madras in 1930. One 'Govindaswami-Das Band is supposed to have preceded NB in Madras, but details are untraceable. The Nathamuni brothers' father and grandfather played *nagaswaram* and clarinet. Nathamuni played clarinet, which he learnt from his father, while Lakshmi-pathi played alto-saxophone and clarinet. Up to the 1960s, NB was popular in Madras, playing in popular public spaces. NB's repertoire was mostly Carnatic music *kriti*-s, thus differing from an army-band performance. NB consisted of ten members clad in trousers and 'bush' shirts, who played the clarinet, soprano clarinet, alto-saxophone, cornet, trombone, possibly baritone horn, euphonium, bagpipes, *tavil*, and *talam*. To accommodate South-Indian classical musical notes, NB included a *tavil* and a *talam*. The band also included a bass instrument – a low brass horn (tuba) – which gave the band a distinctive sound. Nathamuni played several pieces solo.

Seeing merit in having a wind band of its own, the Corporation of Madras invited NB to join its service. The brothers rejected the Corporation's invitation, probably because they made more money working independently. Columbia released seven 78 rpm recordings of NB: six *Tyagaraja kriti*-s and one English tune (*English Note* as per the Columbia Catalogue) in 1941. The *English Note*, popularised by Madurai Mani, became more popular in Madras after A.P. Nagarajan's *Tillānā Mohanāmbal* (1968) filming Kothamangalam Subbu's serial in *Ananda Vikatan* in the 1950s. Musicologist Robert Garfias has the following to say on NB in 1974: "In South India, while some of these bands play film songs, others like the Nathamuni band play a kind of repertoire that is on the edge of the South Indian classical tradition. Some *kriti*-s and such are the same as those performed by classical South Indian musi-

cians. In addition, however, since the tradition of these brass bands is close to that of the *nagaswaram* bands, they included some special *ragas* not often heard in mainstream South Indian music. The *nagaswaram* ensemble is used primarily but not exclusively as an outdoor ensemble. The *nagaswaram* itself is a powerful sounding, long double reed instrument, more than twice the length of its North Indian counterpart, the *shenai*. Starting sometime in the late 19th Century, or perhaps early 20th Century, some *nagaswaram* players began to switch to the Western Albert system clarinet, paralleling the same transition that was happening in Turkey and in Eastern Europe.

Sérfoji II maintained (1777–1832) a wind band in *Tanjore* palace. Therefore familiarity with western musical instruments among *Tanjore* residents is not surprising. *Tanjore nagaswaram* players learnt to play soprano versions with a Müller clarinet (13, 14 keys). One of them (identity unknown) taught clarinet to his sons Balakrishnan (1865-1925),



The Madras Corporation Band rehearses outside of Nehru Stadium, 1989. They stand in their usual circular formation. Clockwise from left: M. Rajaratanam: talam, J. Venugopal: baritone (euphonium), P.A. Kodundaraman: alto saxophone, Bandmaster V. Krishnamurthi: clarinet, P. Gajapati: euphonium, V. Babu: bagpipes, G. Kanayan: bass drum.

ment of the Corporation in My Lady's Garden. The Band performed like a royal band, performing only before Mayoralty. However, over time, the Band's duties included public performances and official functions of the Corporation. It was also available – for hire – to play at private functions. A notification by the Commissioner of the Corporation, December 1988 indicates that the Band performed at different Madras city parks.

I understand that the Corporation Band survives and continues to perform in a low key. Talking of the Corporation Band, a reference to Madras Police Band (MPB) of the Tamil Nadu Special Police is inevitable. Unlike the Corporation Band, the Police in eye-catching uniform play only Western tunes, and, sometimes film music.

Madras brass bands have a fascinating legacy of playing Carnatic music using mostly Western musical instruments. Melodious film music scored by S.M. Subbiah and K.V. Mahadevan overwhelmingly included Western tunes. Contemporary Carnatic music masters A.K.C. Natarajān, K. Gopalnāth, and U. Srinivās play Western instruments. The unknown *nagaswaram* player of 19th Century *Tanjore*, who mastered the clarinet, his three sons, and the Nathamuni brothers in Madras in mid-20th Century were the trailblazers in using Western instruments to play Carnatic music. Do we not want to remember them?

● by Dr. A. Raman

Guruswami (1870-1950), and Venkataraman (1875-1945). This group grew into a family band and became popular as the Balakrishnan *Tanjore* Band (BTB). BTB mastered the art of playing *kirtanam*-s and *varnam*□s. This trend set by BTB was followed by NB in early 20th Century Madras. Some of the renderings by BTB were recorded by the Gramophone Company on 78 rpm discs, listed as 'Telugu and Tamizh tunes', in 1911. Besides many European musical instruments, BTB used *talam* and a native drum (not a *tavil*).

In response to Nathamuni's refusal, the Corporation advertised for a wind band that would become the Madras Corporation Band (MCB) in 1946. Accepting the Corporation's offer, BTB moved from *Tanjore* and became the Corporation Band in 1947. Guruswami, the last living brother of Balakrishnan, was the notional band master, whereas Balakrishnan's son, Kodantapāni led the band. Kodantapāni's son Ramdas assumed leadership of the band in 1958. The Corporation Band reported to the Parks Depart-

Anyone interested in the musical nuances and details of instruments used by BTB, MCB, and NB, should read Booth. I remember seeing the Corporation Band performing on the Marina (where Debi Prasad Roy Chowdhury's *Triumph of Labour* statue now stands), holding my father's

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– THE EDITOR

MADRAS MUSINGS ON THE WEB

To reach out to as many readers as possible who share our keen interest in Madras that is Chennai, and in response to requests from many well-wishers – especially from outside Chennai and abroad who receive their postal copies very late – for an online edition. *Madras Musings* is now on the web at www.madrasmusings.com

– THE EDITOR

• The Tamilvanans of Chennai – Part II



(Continued from last fortnight)

Brothers in arms

There is an old adage in Tamil, *Thaai ettadi paanja, kutty padinaru adi payum*. Freely translated it means if the mother jumps 8 feet, the child will jump 16 feet. Brothers in arms, Lena & Ravi, the multifaceted sons of the legendary Tamil writer Tamilvanan have proved the adage right by taking the legacy of their father to greater heights, Lena as a writer and Ravi as a publisher.

When Tamilvanan had a heart attack and died at the age of only 51, Lena and Ravi had to discontinue their studies temporarily to take over the reins of the business their father had so assiduously built over 30 years. While Lena, with a Master's degree in Tamil literature, followed the footsteps of his father as a writer, Ravi, a qualified Chartered Accountant with a sharp business acumen, took over the family's publishing business, Manimekalai Prasuram.

* * *

Lena remembers that he was only 23, studying Law and already married when his father passed away. While his father was still alive he had written a few essays in Tamil which were published in *Kalkandu*, the magazine targeting youth, which his father edited. His father not only appreciated his writing but also rewarded him with a small honorarium. He never imagined that one day this small brush with writing would land him an editor's job; when S.A.P. Annamalai, the founder editor of *Kumudam* and owner of *Kalkandu* magazine, would invite him to take over the editorship of *Kalkandu*, on his father's death. Lena was very apprehensive about stepping into the larger than life

shoes of his father, but seeing the confidence that Mr Annamalai had in him, he accepted the challenge. Though initially the circulation dropped from 1,80,00 to 1,40,000, it picked up when the readers found that Lena was 'a chip of the old block' and could dish out informative and inspirational issues of *Kalkandu* week after week, just like his father had done for 30 years. Within four years the circulation reached 2,20,000. Lena never looked back and was to continue as the editor of *Kalkandu* magazine for the next 37 years, until he retired in 2014.

• by R.V. Rajan

Lena ensured the continuity of Brand Tamilvanan, not only by wearing dark glasses like his father, but continued with the features made popular in *Kalkandu* by his father. He also introduced new ideas in the magazine. His one page essays on self improvement were lapped up by a whole new generation of youth.

His travelogues, based on his visits to all continents (except Antarctica) not only were read with great interest by his readers but also earned him a prestigious Award from Tanjore Tamil University as the Best Travelogue writer in Tamil. The Q&A feature covering all subjects began to appear under a new title 'Junior Answers'. He also wrote short stories and novels. 'Meendum Sankarlal' a series featuring the fictitious detective Sankarlal made popular by his father, was well received. When one of his well-wishers asked, 'When do you

get the mood to write?' he replied, "There is no question of mood. When I put the pen on paper to write, the ideas simply flow."

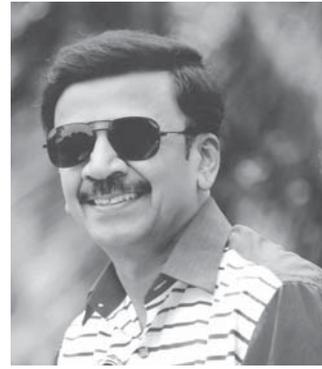
Lena has been as popular a speaker as he is a writer. His speaking assignments have taken him to all the countries where Tamils reside, winning him a legion of friends and admirers worldwide. He is also associated with the family's publishing business as the Chairman of the editorial board of Manimekalai Prasuram. Apart from helping in editing the books published by Manimekalai Prasuram, he also helps Ravi

in choosing the books to be published.

* * *

Ravi Tamilvanan, younger than Lena by just 15 months, is responsible for making the 60-years-old Manimekalai Prasuram one of the top Tamil publishing houses in Tamil Nadu. While his father started the publishing business only to publish his own books, better business sense has made Ravi extend the reach to other authors.

Ravi recalls an incident in his life when he was just 10. When his father one day brought home a big bottle of Quink ink (Don't say ink, say Quink'), Ravi remarked, 'appa, by the time you finish writing with this ink, you would have earned a lakh of rupees, no?'. His father was impressed with his son's business acumen and hugged him. In later years, his father would encourage him to give his views on some of the financial issues he was concerned



Lena Tamilvanan.

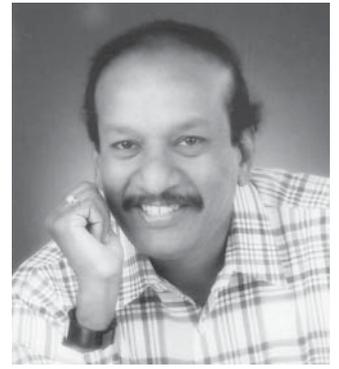
with. He had so much confidence in Ravi's ability to manage a business that he asked him to supervise the running of a family restaurant, located in their own complex in Anna Nagar, when the original owner handed over the restaurant to his father as settlement for some money owed. Ravi was still in college then and remembers managing the affairs of the restaurant, after returning from college every evening. Business was obviously in Ravi's blood. No wonder Manimekalai Prasuram has published over 10,000 titles over the years for 6000 authors. 3600 titles are still active on the sales list.

While both brothers travel abroad regularly, Ravi's trips are strictly business trips to launch new books, organise exhibitions and sale of books. Among the hundred countries that he has visited, Sri Lanka is one of Ravi's favourite destinations. He is proud of the fact that he has helped Sri Lankan Tamil writers to publish over 450 books.

Manimekalai Almanac covering 95 years (1926-2020), is very popular among astrologers. Equally well known is the Directory of 'Who's Who' of Tamil Nadu, providing contact details of well-known people from different walks of life published by the group. Among the many awards Ravi has won from the industry, he values the honorary doctorate that he got from the Washington Tamil University the most.

* * *

Both Lena and Ravi have inherited their father's qualities of charming people with their simplicity, sincerity and friendli-



Ravi Tamilvanan.

ness. They are both highly focused and work hard to achieve whatever they set out to achieve. On a visit to their home, I was amazed to see a joint, well-knit family, living in complete harmony. In these days when nuclear families are the norm, where even children don't want to stay with their parents, it is heartening to see two brothers' families living together under the same roof even after their marriages forty years ago. The contribution of their respective spouses cannot be under-estimated in this successful joint family experiment.

The brothers take the projection of unity in thought one step further. Every day, through a prior understanding, they dress in the same colour outfits, when they go out. Unlike their father who never looked after his health and died young, right from their younger days the brothers have been health freaks. In their early sixties now, both brothers have serious work-outs every morning; Lena plays badminton and Ravi plays tennis. When someone asked Lena, "While you look very fit for your age, how is it that, your father who preached the world how to live longer died young?" Lena replied, "What my father achieved in 51 years of his life was much more than what many people achieve in 100 years."

I am sure the brothers will achieve far more than what their father did.

Feedback welcome on 9840392082 or rvrajan42@gmail.com

A BIG 'THANK YOU'

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Answers to Quiz

1. Cleveland Cavaliers (beating Golden State Warriors); 2. The United Kingdom voting to leave the European Union, 3. Missile Technology Control Regime, 4. Helium, 5. Vidyanjali, 6. Majuli in Assam, 7. The drug is designed for type 2 Diabetes mellitus, 8. They are the first-ever women fighter pilots in the IAF, 9. Sunil Mittal, 10. The Rio Olympics.

* * *

11. Raja of Pa(a)nagal, 12. Pranatharthiharan, 13. *The Hindu*, 14. Nainiappa Naicken Street, 15. Lord Connemara, 16. 'Kalki' Krishnamurthy, 17. Sankarlal, 18. Governor Foxcroft, 19. Subramania Bharati, 20. Tiruchengode.

Photo contest to get Madras Week off to a flying start

Many organisations have started drawing up plans for Madras Week (August 21st-28th) which seems to begin from the first week of August and goes on through the first week of September.

Alliance Française of Madras has announced that it will hold a photography contest during Madras Week 2016 on the theme 'Madras Yesterday... Chennai Today'. The contest is open to all residents of the city.

The entries should depict what the city of Chennai means to participants. Photographs may include typical views of life in the city, cityscapes, culture, tradition, day-to-day life, festivals, nature, wildlife and capturing the magnificence of the city's architecture from the oldest arch to the most modern structures.

Entries to be sent to communication@af-madras.org and must reach us before 12 noon on August 5th.

20 entries will be picked by a select jury and an exhibition of the winning entries will be held at the AFM Gallery from August 22-28.

A participant can send a maximum of two pictures.

Each participant shall submit his or her photos in TIFF file format (preferred) or JPEG format (as an alternative) with a resolution of 300 dpi. Entries will not be accepted on CD or as prints.

Any manipulation or modification to the original image is limited to minor retouching of blemishes and cropping and must not alter the content of the original scene. Highly manipulated images and composite images, including HDRs, are not permitted. Mono-

chrome images are allowed. Entry is open to all photographers – amateur and professionals. Each entry should be accompanied by the data sheet given below duly filled in.

The entries, taken using a photographic process, have to be original works of the entrant, who owns them.

The entrant should permit the organisers to reproduce all or part of the entered material free of charge for AFM publicity in print or online internet site and/or in other media. Results will be sent by email. Entrants should ensure that they provide an active email address and that spam filters are set to accept emails from AFM.

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Dates for Your Diary

Till July 21: Exhibition of Watercolours by artist V. Babu at Studio Palazzo, Nungambakkam.

Till July 22: *Triptych*, an exhibition of the work of Asma Menon, Gita and Thejo Menon (at Artworld, Sarala's Art Centre).

July 27-31: *Adiperukku* and Ayyanaar festival with cultural dances by troupe from Murasu Cultural Community, Kanniyakumari (at DakshinaChitra).

July 31-August 4: Adult workshops on Kerala Murals on Canvas, Bamboo and terracotta (at DakshinaChitra).

Till July 31: *Primitive Parallelism*, paintings by Hemanth Suryawanshi. Tribal arts and crafts have been the main source of inspiration for Hemanth Suryawanshi (at DakshinaChitra).

Till July 30: *Drama in Colour* an exhibition by Madhukar Maitthani and John Tun Sein (at Apparao Galleries).

Till July 30: *The Moon City & The Sun Dream* by Bhavna Sonawane and N. Ramachandran (at Apparao Galleries at The Leela Palace).

Heritage of Chennai – multimedia contest for schools

This contest is being held in connection with Madras Day 2016. The contest encourages city school students to explore Chennai's heritage and present the topic given to them in multi-media form (Powerpoint Presentation).

Theme: Streetscape of any old part of city

The Powerpoint presentation should be submitted to the organisers on or before August 12, 5 pm. E-mail it to: themadrasday@gmail.com. (Subject line – Madras Day – PP Contest) (Please do not courier the project. Organisers do not entertain hand delivered entries!)

The contest is open to school children studying in classes 8 to 12. A school can send only one team. Each team MUST have 3 members and all 3 members must take turns to make one presentation.

Choose a street in an old sector of our city which has old houses and buildings (at least 10 of them on either side dating to the 1930s-60s or before). Study the streetscape, the local architecture, the nature of houses and residents and the striking features of this street. Take classy photos, make notes, talk to people in the know.

Ask your school teacher-adviser to seek the approval of the

organisers. E-mail to – themadrasday@gmail.com – and get the OK to start work on the project.

The presentation in Powerpoint on the approved theme will have to be done by all the three participants. It can be done in English or in Tamil or a mix! The duration of the complete presentation – PowerPoint and Oral – should not exceed 10 minutes. Participants should be prepared to answer on-the-spot questions from the judges.

On each slide, you must have a maximum of just 3 lines, each line 5 words only. Dumping content on a slide earns you minus marks!.

The team should retain a copy of its project on a pen-drive or copy it on an electronic device and bring it to the venue of the contest. The organisers will provide a PC and a projector at the venue to help teams make their presentations.

The contest is open to the first 25 teams to register on first-come-first-serve basis.

The contest will take place on August 23 from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm with a 30-minute lunch break (you need to bring your lunch!). Venue: Srinivasa Sastri Hall, Luz, Mylapore. (Report at 9 am to download your PP onto our PC).

The best THREE presentations will be awarded trophies,

gifts and certificates. All participants will be given certificates. The prizes will be presented at about 3 pm. Prizes will be awarded based on quality of research / presentation of visuals and points / presentation format and answers to the questions posed by the judges.

This event is supported by *Mylapore Times*, the neighbourhood newspaper, and South India National Association (SINA), Luz.

There are over 100 events held for Madras Day/ Madras Week in August. All information is at www.themadrasday.in

–Vincent D'Souza
Co-ordinator

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